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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3015  
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC//PA  
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU  
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 8235  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 3030  
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 2148  
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 6016  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 5824  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2425  
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU  
RHMFIUU/USDOCO 6ATAF IZMIR TU  
RHMFIUU/39OS INCIRLIK AB TU  
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 523 IZMIR TU  
RHMFIUU/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 001831

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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL  
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18, 2007

In Today's Papers

Erdogan Vows to Quit Politics if Not Returned to Power  
All papers: Addressing people at an AKP rally in Isparta, PM Erdogan said that he would quit politics if his party does not receive enough votes to form a single party government. He challenged CHP leader Deniz Baykal and MHP leader Devlet Bahceli to do the same. Bahceli, campaigning in Iskenderun, responded to Erdogan's remarks saying "Erdogan has realized that his time in politics is over; his statement was not a challenge but rather an acceptance of one's own political death." Mainstream Sabah reports that Baykal responded by saying "good-bye" to Erdogan. Answering questions on NTV, DP leader Agar criticized Erdogan's statement and said "one should accept remaining in opposition as well as coming to power."

Meanwhile, Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak reports an AKP-sponsored survey by Pollmark shows that AKP will get 42 percent, CHP 22 percent, MHP 12 percent, and independents 24 percent of the votes in the general elections.

Tension Increases over Turkey-Iran Gas Deal  
Yeni Safak, Milliyet, Hurriyet, Zaman, Cumhuriyet and others: Controversy continues regarding the gas deal between Turkey and Iran. Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak reports that although the US reminded Turkey that the agreement violates the UN sanctions against Iran, PM Erdogan and FM Gul supported the deal, saying "Turkey is not doing anything wrong." Meanwhile, the undersecretary for economic and commercial affairs at the Iranian Embassy in Ankara, Ahmad Noorani said at a press conference that the "people in the region are entitled to make decisions about the future of the region."

Sami Kohen writes in the mainstream Milliyet: "Changing circumstances create an impact on changing government policies. Turkey used to place more importance on countries other than Iran

but the recent gas agreement wfQX3